

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
RECOVERY WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
(FAQ'S)

1. Who is eligible to apply?

The LRA is looking for proposals from entities that form alliances, or collaborations, that are made up of a consortium of employers from an industry, business or industry associations, workforce investment boards, economic development corporations or organizations, private or public post-secondary institutions of education, non-profit or community-based organizations. The collaborative must identify 1) the lead agency, or workforce intermediary, that will convene partners and coordinate activities, 2) a fiscal agent and 3) service providers. The lead agency, fiscal agent, and service provider can technically be the same organization; however, employer partners must also be part of the collaborative.

2. Is this a program for entities in designated parishes that have been impacted by hurricanes Katrina and Rita?

The individuals trained using CDBG funds **must** be placed in jobs located in the designated parishes; however, training does not have to take place in the parishes impacted by the hurricanes.

3. What are the designated parishes?

Parishes included in this program are those that received the most damage from the storms. Tier 1 parishes received the most damage; Tier 2 received somewhat less.

Tier 1 parishes:

Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Vermilion

Tier 2 parishes:

Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Washington,

4. How will “region” be defined?

Proposers should define the “region” they will serve based on the partners included and the geographic area the group believes it should serve.

5. How will it be ensured that trained individuals work in the designated parishes?

Proposers will be expected to include a plan for job placement and job retention. The Workforce Commission will be the program managers, and will monitor contractors to ensure that job placement and job retention strategies are implemented.

6. Is this a program for certain industries?

The training program is for jobs in the industry sectors that have been deemed critical for recovery and/or have the highest job demand: Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Cultural Economy, Healthcare, Oil and Gas, and Transportation. Industries that make up these sectors are listed in the following table:

INDUSTRIES WITHIN EACH SECTOR	
NAICS	
OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY	
324	Petroleum Refining
211	Oil and Gas Extraction
213	Support Activities for Mining
486	Pipeline Transportation
CONSTRUCTION	
236	Construction of Buildings
237	Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction
238	Specialty Trade Contractors
ADVANCED MANUFACTURING	
311	Food Manufacturing
325	Chemical Manufacturing
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing
333	Machinery Manufacturing
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing
TRANSPORTATION	
481	Air Transportation
483	Water Transportation
484	Truck Transportation
485	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation
488	Support Activities for Transportation
HEALTHCARE	
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services
622	Hospitals
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities
CULTURAL ECONOMY	
pt. 323	Printing and Related Support Activities

pt. 453	Art dealers and retail art galleries
487	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation
pt.451	Book and Music Stores
511	Publishing Industries (except Internet)
pt. 512	Motion Picture and Sound Recording
pt. 541	Architectural and Specialized Design Services
pt. 611	Educational Services
711	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries
712	Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions
7221, 7223	Full-Service + Special Service Restaurants.
pt. 900	Local Government
067	Self-Employment

Source: Dr. Raymond J. Brady, Systems Solutions Consulting (August 2006)

7. Can a proposal be submitted for other industries, or sectors, that are vital to the economy of the impacted regions?

Yes. A proposal for any other industries, or sectors, must make the case of why this sector is critical to recovery, and meet all of the other requirements and criteria of the RFP

8. Is this a training program for a specific target population?

51% of individuals trained must be low to moderate income. Contractors will be required to verify and report the household income of participants enrolled in the training program.

9. How is it determined that an individual is low-to-moderate income?

Low-to-moderate income is defined as below the median income in a metropolitan statistical area. Information on the median income of each parish will be provided to contractors, as well as a reporting form for each individual.

10. Can businesses apply for this money?

Companies must be a part of the alliance that will design and implement the program, and for-profit training providers can participate as trainers; however, for-profit companies cannot serve as a fiscal agent.

11. What is a fiscal agent?

A fiscal agent is an organization that is responsible for the fiscal accounting and reporting of the program. The fiscal agent is the entity by which the state will conduct any fiduciary transactions on the contract.

12. Is this a training program to train for entry-level jobs?

Each applicant will have to identify which occupational skills will be taught by the program, and the skills must be aligned with employer needs. Training must be relatively short-term (2 years or less), and must include career advancement opportunities for individuals.

13. Can these funds be used to train incumbent workers?

The Louisiana Department of Labor currently has an incumbent worker training program. We are encouraging employers to use that program for that purpose. The intent of the CDBG funds is to train low-to-moderate income individuals, with an emphasis on recruiting displaced citizens.

14. Can these funds be used to provide housing, or other support services, to people who are being trained?

Support services, including stipends for housing, transportation, and child care, may be provided. Proposers are encouraged to collaborate with community based organizations, human service agencies, and other providers to provide these services.

15. When do you expect to release the RFP?

The RFP will be made public when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approves LRA's Action Plan Amendment #3.

16. Does this program allow companies to take advantage of state incentive programs for expansion?

There are no restrictions on companies taking advantage of state incentive programs for expansion.

17. What is the time frame for awarding the contracts?

Proposals will be due 30 days after the date the RFP is released. It is anticipated that proposals will be evaluated and contracts will be awarded before December 1, 2006.

18. Can work-readiness, or literacy, providers apply for funds to do work-readiness, or literacy, training for a number of sectors?

Sector strategies differ from traditional employment and training programs in that they target specific industries or sectors within specific regions or labor markets to address the needs of employers and workers. Typically, an intermediary organization works closely with employers to assess and meet the industry's workforce needs, not only by providing appropriately trained workers but also by assisting the industry to develop strategies that improve recruitment and retention. As a result of the process, the intermediary assists workers at different levels to improve their job situation. RWTP proposers will be required to submit a plan for addressing skills deficiencies in individuals being trained in the program, and organizations that provide basic skills training should be part of the sector-based alliances. Literacy providers can collaborate with more than one sector-based alliance.

19. In the most affected areas, who will be contacting the people and how will the money be contracted?

The Workforce Commission will be advertising the RFP, and will be sending the RFP to potential proposers. Contracts will be awarded based on the competitive selection process that will be explained in the RFP.

20. Can a training provider be included on more than one proposal?

Yes, providers can be included on more than one proposal.

21. Can the training be actually on the job, and will it actually pay the wages?

Training can be on the job; however, wages can not be paid by CDBG funds.

22. Is there a limited time for the use of this money?

Programs cannot be longer than 36 months, or go beyond December 31, 2009, whichever comes first. However, it should be noted that the intent of the RWTP is to get this money working to recruit, assess, and train participants as quickly as possible.

23. What are the criterion that will be used to determine a successful proposal?

Criteria will be weighted for a total possible score of 100. There will also be additional criteria by which extra points may be awarded. The RFP will provide a full explanation of the criteria. In summary, the criteria will be:

- Justification of Need
- Alignment and cost effectiveness of goals, objectives, and outcomes
- Strength and breadth of collaboration, and coordination of services and resources
- Quality of the proposed training plan

- Impact on low-to-moderate individuals
- Extra points may be assigned to proposals that include a plan for serving individuals from underserved populations including, but not limited to, high school students not planning to go to college, out-of-school youth, offenders, low-literate adults, pregnant teens, adjudicated youth, and homeless youth.

24. What will be the measure of success, or metrics, to determine a successful program?

Contractors will be required to submit quarterly reports to the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Louisiana Recovery Authority, and the Office of Community Development. Reports will include the following performance indicators:

- Number of participants who entered training
- Percentage of participants who entered training who were displaced by the storm
- Number and percentage of participants who entered training and completed training
- Number and percentage of participants who completed training and placed in employment
- Percentage of average earnings increase after placement
- Number and percentage of workers retained per quarter

Contractors will be expected to set reasonable targets for each indicator, and meet or exceed targets to a reasonable degree.

25. Will the state be able to advance contractors funds to begin work on the programs?

The source of the funding for the RWTP is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Federal funds can not be advanced to contractors.

26. Can any money be used for planning?

Funds can be used to plan or facilitate the work of the alliance, however any pre-award costs can not be paid.

27. Can funds be used for “train the trainer” type activities?

As long as the “train the trainer” activities helps to meet the needs of employers, and is aligned with the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the program it is allowable.

28. Is there a restriction on the percentage of funds that can be used for training?

Any portion of the proposed budget can be used for training, as long as it is cost effective.

29. Is there a required time frame for planning?

There is no required time frame, however most of the planning should be done at the beginning of the program, and should continue throughout the program, to the degree it is necessary for quality program management.

30. Many training institutions in the impacted areas have suffered significant losses to their facilities. Can these funds be utilized to create actual training resources and/or equipment for labs? Some examples might be welding machines, microscopes, process control valves, computers, ovens, construction tools, teaching reference materials, and perhaps even temporary classrooms.

Funds can be used for the purchase of equipment; however, funds can not be used for the purchase of and or buildings and costs of new construction, renovation, or capital improvements to existing facilities.